

Branch Chair's Annual Report 2020

On behalf of the committee of the Canterbury branch, it is my pleasure to report on the 2020 year. 2020 has been a rollercoaster of a year with global uncertainty and economic challenges, but there really has been no better place to be than Aotearoa New Zealand. I am proud of the resilience and continued dedication of our members as they dealt with a difficult and challenging year. Even though responding to the coronavirus crisis was the all-consuming task of 2020, we cannot take our eyes off the growing climate crisis. As kaitiaki and stewards of our organisations, board leadership and adaptability are now more critical than ever to create and innovate for a sustainable future.

Institute of Directors

The Institute of Directors is the professional body for directors and is at the heart of New Zealand's governance community. We support and enable directors to add value to their organisations and wider communities and prepare them to positively transform the future.

The IoD in New Zealand began over 40 years ago as a division of the Institute of Directors in the UK. In 1989, the Institute of Directors in New Zealand (Inc) adopted its own constitution and became a separate legal entity. Today, we have more than 9000 members connected through our regional branch network and national headquarters.

Membership

Membership nationally has remained steady and the Canterbury region continued to grow, with 1,302 members by year's end. Although growth may be seen as an admirable ambition, growth should not simply be for growth's sake. Our aim has been to ensure that members receive value from being part of the Institute. To that end, the local committee have worked hard to ensure that there is a diversity of speakers, courses and other events. I still maintain that although not everything is for everyone, there is something for everybody.

Membership is easy: pay your subscription and turn up to some events. A sure sign of being serious about practising governance is to be a Chartered member. The Chartered designation offers stakeholders an assurance that directors have met professional standards of knowledge and skill that supports them to carry out their duties as a director. Their knowledge, background, character and experience make them role models for other members, their organisations and the community as a whole. Congratulations to those members promoted during the year. One of the most satisfying jobs as branch chair is to present Chartered certificates to those individuals who have made the investment in terms of time, and money, to demonstrate their commitment to leading excellence in the profession. A total of 20 new Chartered Member and 4 Chartered Fellow certificates were presented to members in 2020.

Functions

Despite the challenges of 2020, it has been another successful and busy year for IoD Canterbury with member engagement at events actually increasing as we moved to offer more opportunities for online engagement, something that will continue in 2021. In Canterbury we ran 47 in-person and online events with 1,870 attendees.

We have strived to keep delivering a wide range of speakers and topics. A schedule of national webcasts during the year connected members from across the country giving access to some excellent speakers on very relevant topics. For 2020, these followed the Institute's national themes of Climate action, Governing for purpose, Data and privacy, Reputation and trust, Board leadership/stewardship.

The branch has continued its programme of Build your governance capability workshops and Directors Deep Dive lunches, as well as introducing Fireside Chat sessions with senior directors. These more intimate settings facilitate robust round-table discussions on key issues for directors.

To ensure we meet the needs of our diverse membership, we always welcome feedback about our programme and suggestions for future topics.

Director Development

As well as 7 Essentials courses, Chairing the Board and Audit & Risk committee courses were also held in Canterbury during 2020. As well as face-to-face courses, we have developed a wider range of online courses and webinars. This includes providing Finance Essentials and Governance Essentials as online module series and webinar on demand series and introducing new courses like The Board's Role in Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Peer Support

My sincere thanks go to colleagues Graham Heenan and Jen Crawford for continuing to provide the Peer Support Service. This enables members to discuss professional or personal issues with a senior director on a completely confidential basis. I appreciate your contribution in supporting and guiding local directors with challenges. Graham will be stepping down in March 2021 and we thank Chartered Fellow Peter Young for agreeing to take on this role.

Awards

We are fortunate in Canterbury to offer two sought after Awards – each with intern placements as part of the award package.

The 2020 Emerging Director Award was presented to two recipients: Melinda Baillie and Cam Finlayson. They each won a place as an intern director at the boards of EA Networks and Connectics respectively. Recipients of our 2020 First Steps in Governance Award were Olivia Egerton and Alex Booker with intern placements on the boards of Ronald McDonald House South Island and Comcare respectively. Eric de Boer was the inaugural winner of our West Coast First Steps in Governance Award and received an internship with Development West Coast. We look forward to watching the progress of their governance careers in the future.

We are grateful to Connetics (and its shareholder Orion and ultimately Christchurch City Holdings Limited), EA Networks, Ronald McDonald House South Island, Comcare and Development West Coast for investing in the future of good governance by providing intern opportunities to the directors of the future.

Sponsors

A sincere thanks to our principal branch sponsors: Duncan Cotterill, Nexia New Zealand, Secure Strategy and University of Canterbury Centre for Entrepreneurship. Your continued support throughout the year is greatly appreciated, as is your high level of engagement.

To our departing sponsors Secure Strategy and University of Canterbury, it has been a pleasure working with you and we look forward to partnering on some new initiatives in the coming months. We are delighted to welcome onboard our new branch sponsor for 2021-23, strategic execution partners Pivot & Pace.

Thanks also to the local staff of our national sponsors ASB Bank and Marsh Limited, and to our longstanding venue sponsor The George. It is so much more than purely their financial support that we appreciate – it is their energy: interaction with the committee and members, their attendance at events, their hosting of sponsor lunches and their willingness to offer support and advice when needed. Please consider supporting them, their commitment is exemplary.

Our always popular Christmas function is also well supported, with prizes provided by: Black Cat Cruises, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa, Mitre 10 Ferrymead, Mona Vale Homestead, Scenic Hotel Group, Scorpio Books and The Rockshop.

Branch Committee

The number of functions held by the branch is, alone, sufficient to require a deep level of commitment from the members of the local branch committee. I am very grateful for, and appreciative of, the work that my colleagues have provided throughout the year. It is their hard work and dedication of Lloyd Mander, Nick Carter, Jane Cartwright, Hannah Doney, Richard Hegan, Mike Killick, Annemarie Mora and Mark Rogers that has contributed to the success of 2020. Thank you, Lloyd, for stepping into the role of National Council representative for the branch.

All of the committee members are busy people with multiple roles and responsibilities with multiple organisations. Branch Manager Sharynn Johnson is an invaluable support to us all, arranging and attending every one of the many events, as well as managing membership, sponsors and liaison with our national office. Her unwavering dedication to the branch continues to earn our deep gratitude.

Finally, thank you, members, for your engagement. As I say at each New Members' lunch, what you get out of the Institute of Directors will be directly proportional to what you put in. It has been pleasing to see such high levels of input. This can only be good for the future of the profession of governance.

Geordie Hooft

Canterbury Branch Chair

10 March 2021